

Please Vote NO on SB 1390:

Feral cats; trap, neuter, and return programs

A coalition of animal sheltering professionals, animal protection organizations, conservationists, and wildlife rehabilitation experts, representing hundreds of thousands of Virginia residents, **strongly oppose Senate Bill 1390**, which seeks to give cat feeders blanket immunity from Virginia's animal-protection statute, rabies vaccination requirements, laws protecting property owners, and more. SB 1390 would legalize abandonment of domestic cats in Virginia, putting cats, wildlife, and the public at risk.



This so-called “community cat” (see tipped ear) in Norfolk, Virginia, suffered for weeks or months with a severe, painful facial infection.

Three Ways SB 1390 Would Harm Animals and Virginia Residents

It Would Deprive Cats of the Legal Protections That Virginia Law Currently Affords Them

The bill seeks to absolve cat feeders of any responsibility, meaning that cats would no longer be entitled to basic legal protections that are currently required, such as care that includes food, water, shelter from the elements, and veterinary treatment to prevent and alleviate suffering.

It Would Threaten Public Health and Safety

SB 1390 does not include a requirement that cats be vaccinated against rabies and other contagious diseases or receive preventive care for parasites that are contagious to humans and their animal companions. **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** and the **Virginia Department of Health** recognize cats as the main domestic animal linked to human exposure to rabies.

It Would Decimate Wildlife Populations, Including Native Wild Birds

SB 1390 completely disregards the undeniable threat that cats pose to native wildlife populations, which are already under tremendous strain because of human encroachment and environmental degradation. **An estimated 1.3 to 4 billion birds and 6.3 to 22.3 billion mammals are killed by cats every year in the United States.** SB 1390 would worsen this crisis.

Allowing the release of domestic, non-native predators outdoors—absent enforceable standards—puts many public interests at serious risk. **Given the number and various purviews of stakeholders on this issue, the coalition respectfully suggests that the bill be tabled until next year’s legislative session while stakeholder groups are given the opportunity to work together** under the auspices of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to craft a more carefully considered bill representing a larger degree of ownership by stakeholders.

Because SB 1390 would endanger cats, wildlife and public health and safety and would wreak havoc on the Commonwealth’s ecosystems, this coalition of organizations and experts urges you to oppose it:

- American Association of Zoo Veterinarians
- American Bird Conservancy
- Association of Avian Veterinarians
- Audubon Society of Northern Virginia
- Blue Ridge Wildlife Center
- Center for Conservation Biology, Inc.
- Danville Area Humane Society
- Eastern Shore of Virginia Birding and Wildlife Programs, Inc.
- Ernesto Domínguez, D.V.M., DACVPM, CWR
- People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)
- Save Lucy Campaign
- Virginia Alliance for Animal Shelters
- Virginia Animal Control Association
- Virginia Conservation Network
- Virginia Society of Ornithology
- Virginia Wildlife
- Virginia Zoo
- Wildlife Center of Virginia
- Wildlife Society

Please vote to bring stakeholders together to solve the problem.
OPPOSE SB 1390 as written.

PETA